

July 10, 2013

## Unmanned X-47B makes historic landing aboard USS George H.W. Bush

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The X-47B lands aboard USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), July 10, marking the first time an unmanned aircraft has made an arrested landing aboard a modern aircraft carrier. (U.S. Navy photo)

**USS George H.W. Bush (AT SEA) –** The Navy moved one step closer to integrating unmanned aircraft into carrier-based operations today, when the X-47B Unmanned Combat Air System (UCAS) demonstrator landed aboard USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77).

This was the first time an unmanned aircraft has made an arrested landing aboard a modern aircraft carrier.

The July 10 landing was the final part of three at-sea test periods for X-47B during the last eight months, culminating a decade of Navy unmanned integration efforts that show the Navy's readiness to move forward with unmanned carrier aviation says [Rear Adm. Mat Winter](#), who oversees the Program Executive Office for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons in Patuxent River, Md.

"This demonstration has enabled us to merge industry and government technologies together which will enable the U.S. Navy to pursue future unmanned aviation carrier capabilities," said Winter, who witnessed the historic landing. "The government engineering and testing team in partnership with our Northrop Grumman team members have matured

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the technologies in this X-47B system to position us for today's event, which marks a milestone in naval aviation."

During today's testing, the X-47B completed the 35-minute transit from Pax River to the carrier and caught the 3 wire with the aircraft's tailhook. The arrested landing effectively brought the aircraft from approximately 145 knots to stop in less than 350 feet.

Shortly after the initial landing, the aircraft was launched off the ship using the carrier's catapult. The X-47B then proceeded to execute one more arrested landing.

"We have been using the same [carrier] landing technology for more than 50 years now and the idea that we can take a large UAV and operate in that environment is fascinating," said [Capt. Jaime Engdahl](#), Navy UCAS program manager. "When I think about all of the hours and all of the work-ups the team put into executing this event, I had no doubt the air vehicle was going to do exactly what it was supposed to do."

The X-47B spent several weeks aboard aircraft carriers in recent months. The Navy UCAS program successfully completed [CVN deck operations aboard USS Harry S. Truman \(CVN 75\)](#) in December 2012 and aboard Bush in May. During the [May underway period](#), the X-47B completed its first-ever catapult launch. Since May, the integrated test team conducted a number of shore-based arrestments at Pax River in preparation for the demonstration aboard the ship.

"We have learned a lot from our flight deck operations, our shore-based flight test and extensive modeling and simulation," Engdahl added. "Our team has executed all major program objectives and developed the concept of operations and demonstrated technologies for a future unmanned carrier-based aircraft capability. [Today] we have proven we can seamlessly integrate unmanned systems into the carrier environment."

Click here to watch video from today's landing:

<http://youtu.be/RzKDCO9Kual>

<http://youtu.be/cPaH8CCtRVU>

<http://youtu.be/Rc2k6G8LuqY>

<http://youtu.be/3i5iYKSuzfc>

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The X-47B Unmanned Combat Air System (UCAS) demonstrator takes off from Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., and heads for USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) to conduct its first-ever carrier landing, July 10. (U.S. Navy photo)



The X-47B aboard USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) after safely landing. During the July 10 test, the X-47B caught the 3 wire with the aircraft's tailhook. The arrested landing effectively brought the aircraft from approximately 145 knots to stop in less than 350 feet. (U.S. Navy photo)